



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Office of Communications

USCIS Update

Dec. 22, 2010

USCIS Revises Form for Naturalization Candidates Seeking Medical Disability Exceptions

Updated Form N-648 and Training Will Enhance Consistency and Clarity

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) released today a revised [Form N-648](#), Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, for individuals with disabilities who are seeking exceptions from the English and civics requirements for naturalization. USCIS will shortly be offering public information sessions on the revised form for medical professionals and other stakeholders.

The law requires naturalization applicants to demonstrate proficiency of U.S. civics and the English language. Individuals with certain disabilities or impairments may request exceptions from either or both of these statutory requirements. Form N-648 was revised following extensive dialogue among USCIS subject-matter experts, customers, medical professionals, community-based organizations and legal practitioners. The revisions are intended to clarify the requirements and instructions and to standardize the process. The form enables medical professionals to provide information that is necessary for USCIS to understand the medical professional's diagnosis and its relationship to the naturalization requirements. The Form N-648 and the accompanying guidance will assist USCIS adjudicators as they review each form.

In January, USCIS will begin hosting public information sessions to help medical professionals and other stakeholders understand the changes to Form N-648. Online videos will be available to explain how best to use the form. The [interim guidance](#) on the revised Form N-648 for USCIS personnel is currently available for public comment at www.uscis.gov/outreach.

USCIS will accept the previous version of the Form N-648 for 90 days, from Dec. 22, 2010, until March 21, 2011. Beginning March 22, 2011, USCIS will only accept the current version of Form N-648, dated 9/24/2010.

For more information on USCIS and its programs, visit www.uscis.gov.

- USCIS -



Fact Sheet

Dec. 22, 2010

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Introduction

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) released today a revised Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, for individuals with disabilities who are seeking exceptions from the English and civics requirements for naturalization. USCIS will shortly be hosting public information sessions on the revised form for medical professionals and other stakeholders.

Background

The law requires naturalization applicants to demonstrate proficiency of U.S. civics and the English language. Individuals with certain disabilities or impairments may request exceptions from either or both of these statutory requirements. Form N-648 was revised following extensive dialogue among USCIS subject-matter experts, customers, medical professionals, community-based organizations and legal practitioners.

Form Revisions

The form revisions are intended to clarify the requirements and instructions and to standardize the process for applicants, medical professionals and USCIS officers. The revised form enables medical professionals to provide information that is necessary for USCIS to understand the medical professional's diagnosis and its relationship to the naturalization requirements. The Form N-648 and the accompanying guidance will assist USCIS adjudicators as they review each form.

As a result of the revisions:

- Applicants and medical professionals can more clearly understand the requirements for submitting Form N-648. USCIS also revised the instructions to clarify how to complete the form.
- Medical professionals can focus their evaluation on a medical diagnosis and need not evaluate the applicant's daily activities, which may not be relevant.
- Medical professionals can complete the form electronically or on paper.
- Applicants are no longer required to report if another government agency has made a disability determination for them.
- Interpreters for applicants or medical professionals will complete a new certification section of the form.

Public Information Sessions

In January, USCIS will begin hosting public information sessions to help medical professionals and other stakeholders understand the changes to Form N-648. Online videos will be available to explain how best to use the form.

Additional Information

USCIS will accept the previous version of the Form N-648 for 90 days, from Dec. 22, 2010 until March 21, 2011. Beginning March 22, 2011, USCIS will only accept the current version of Form N-648, dated 9/24/2010.

The interim guidance instructing USCIS personnel how to review the revised Form N-648 is available for public review and comment at www.uscis.gov/outreach.

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